

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 37-40, 42, 49, 51 and 52 are presently pending in this application, Claims 41 and 47 having been withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, Claims 41 and 43-48 and 50 having been canceled, Claims 37, 49, 51 and 52 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 40, 46, 49 and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter not enabling to one skilled in the relevant art; Claims 49-52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite; and Claims 43-46, 48 and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Schwetz et al. (U.S. Patent 4,908,173). However, Claims 49, 51 and 52 were indicated as including allowable subject matter.

First, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indications that Claims 37-40 and 42 have been allowed and that Claims 49, 51 and 52 would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, Claims 49, 50 and 51 have been amended to clarify the subject matters without altering their original scopes, and thus are believed to be in compliance with the requirement of the statute. Also, Claim 37 has been amended solely for the purpose of clarity. Thus, the amendment in Claim 37 is merely cosmetic and is not believed to alter its original scope in any way. Regarding the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, Applicants respectfully submit that the upper limit, "1000°C", recited in Claim 40 find support in Figure 9 as discussed in page 33, lines 30-32, of Specification. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 40 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, be

withdrawn and that Claim 40 be allowed along with the other claims depending from Claim 37. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully request that Claims 41 and 43-48 and 50 be canceled without prejudice. If, however, the Examiner disagrees with any of the amendments and discussions presented above, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive a mutually agreeable solution and expedite the prosecution of the present application.

With regard to the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 8, 2004, submitted herewith is a copy of English abstract of JP 11-355551. Applicants respectfully request that the Information Disclosure Statement be duly considered and acknowledged.

In light of the prior indication of allowable subject matter and in view of the amendments and discussions presented above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and thus the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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